

# Othello – "one that loved not wisely, but too well" essay sample

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## **Othello – “ One that loved not wisely, but too well” Essay Sample**

Othello describes himself as “ one that loved not wisely, but too well,” which infers that his love is so intense, passionate and fulfilling that he has a dramatic weakness for making mistakes. Othello is a man of action, often makes quick and irrational decisions, enters his loving relationship under false pretences and has his own conflicting identities as well as being self-deluded, which ensures that he is judged as “ one that loved not wisely, but too well.” Othello is a man of action and as a result, is extreme in whatever course of action he chooses. Othello’s extreme haste and resolve is best evidenced when he sorrowfully exclaims “ Nay, that’s certain; but yet the pity of it, Iago! O, Iago, the pity of it Iago!” a sorrowful cry for his belief that he has committed himself to action and although he wants to change his course of action, feels bound by a duty to act upon his previous statements.

Othello’s inability to falter on what he believes to be binding statements, gives proof to his capacity for loving too well, for he is so extreme in his actions that when he chooses to love Desdemona he loves her with such an intense passion, that he loves her too well. Further evidence of Othello’s extreme devotion to actions comes when he exclaims, “ ‘Tis destiny unshunnable, like death: even then this forked plague is fated to us when we do quicken,” likening the fate of Desdemona to death, such is the strength of fate and his duty to act. Othello loves Desdemona with a similar passion and dedication which is why he loves Desdemona too well.

Othello did not love Desdemona "wisely," for he was unable to understand that his original love was not adequate to be sustainable. On the quality of the love between Desdemona and Othello, he claimed that "She lov'd me for the dangers I had pass'd, And I lov'd her that she did pity them," which is evidence of Othello loving his own grandeur reflected in Desdemona's enthralled eyes and not a profoundly tender, passionate affection for one another. The fact that neither Desdemona, who was infatuated with Othello's "story," nor Othello, who was infatuated with seeing his own grand reflection in the eyes of such an adoring Desdemona, never loved each other in the first place, serves to provide evidence for the fact that Othello, did not love "wisely." Othello himself is deluding himself by constructing an image for him to be remembered as, with an inescapable conflict between self-deception and self-awareness, which is evidence of his incapacity to love "well."

Othello "Yet she must die, else she'll betray more men," shows love to the state, "the story of my life.... the battles, sieges and fortunes that I have pass'd," glorifies himself showing his egocentricity and "Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate," shows love for reputation. When speaking of Desdemona, Othello rarely mentions her name, until he has murdered her, which shows how he has love for war, the patriarchy and himself above Desdemona. Othello's low prioritisation of his wife proves that although he may love too well by loving too much, he is unable to devote enough love to Desdemona, for he has other more important passions in his life. The fact that Othello has many passions and loves all of them, it is not wise to have

so many loves. Othello also has conflicting identities, " Where a malignant and a Turban'd Turk Beat a Venetian and traduced the State, I took by th'throat the circumcised dog And smote him thus," believing himself to be a Turk, Venetian and dog, unable to love himself and therefore unable to love Desdemona " well."

As a result of Othello's extreme nature and unwavering resolve, he has the ability to love " too well" and with extreme vigour. Othello has conflicting identities and has a plethora of passions of which he chooses to devote love to, preventing him from loving wisely. To compound the problem Desdemona has a low priority amongst his passions and allegiances, devotion to the patriarchy, the state and his own reputation, which results in a lack of wisdom for love.

Bibliography: [www. sparknotes. com/shakespeare/othello/](http://www.sparknotes.com/shakespeare/othello/)